

# Utah Department of Health

## EFFICIENCIES

### Department Overview

On the whole, the Department has managed to continue meeting the demands of public health remarkably well in spite of ongoing reductions in funding and personnel that occurred over several years. Workload methods and administrative responsibilities have been restructured at the Program level in all Divisions to create economies of time, labor, and physical supplies while producing the least possible impact upon delivery of health services to clients. Expanding use of technology-based communications in every Division has increased productivity by allowing more efficient collection and dispersal of information.

Following is a detailed report of notable efficiencies achieved within each Division.

### Details by Division

#### **Executive Director's Office**

- The Executive Director, Deputy Directors and the Financial Officer conduct quarterly management reviews among the UDOH divisions to ensure that communication flows smoothly between programs and projects, to eliminate redundant effort, and to identify any emerging management issues. Balanced Scorecard initiatives and results will be added to the quarterly reviews.
- A standing UDOH Audit Committee has been chartered to meet semi-monthly to review audit reports and follow up on corrective actions.

#### **Center for Health Data**

- In August we put Electronic Death Entry Network (EDEN) in production statewide. EDEN eliminates the paper death registration form, allowing physicians and funeral directors to file official death information over the Internet and provide families with their copy of the death certificate within days.
- We put on-line for consumers five new hospital comparison reports on heart conditions and surgeries, hip and knee surgeries, maternity and newborns, and pneumonia hospitalizations.
- On busy days at the vital records window we provide customers waiting for their birth certificate with a beeper so they can watch a video or relax in the cafeteria. We beep them when their copies are ready.

#### **Division of Epidemiology and Laboratory Services**

- ELS was reorganized to include two deputy Division directors who have critical expertise in epidemiology and laboratory science. Each of the three Division leaders hold dual roles: The Division Director also serves as the Public Health Nursing Director, the Deputy Director for Epidemiology also serves as the State Epidemiologist, and the

Deputy Director for the Public Health Laboratory also serves as the Medical Director of the Lab.

- Four State departments (Agriculture & Food, Environmental Quality, Health, and Public Safety) have come together in an unprecedented collaboration to merge their laboratories “under one roof.” This new “Unified State Laboratory,” ranked #1 on the Building Board’s priority list for the 2007 Legislative Session, will create efficiencies by fostering joint use of laboratory spaces & equipment, and by promoting collaborative planning and response across all four departments.
- A comprehensive, web-based electronic lab information management system is being installed at the Public Health Laboratory. This state-of-the-art system will reduce down time due to computer system failure, increase financial accountability and streamline billing processes, improve coordination, and reduce the number of systems to maintain from three to one. The first module has been completed and the next module is in development. Also, the accounts receivable module is in development.
- Division staff have conducted a review of the business system within the Division and produced a document that details all the steps necessary to conducting ELS work. (This is posted on the Division DOHnet website for ease of access.) This document will be used for the next step: Implementing e-business processes for the Division.
- Every local health department received assistance in tracking, treating and controlling diseases this year, from mumps, measles and meningitis to West Nile Virus, E. coli and other enteric issues. In all, relationships with local health departments were strengthened and improved upon to better public health protection efforts in Utah.
- The Utah Notification Information System (UNIS) is widely used for emergency notifications, information sharing across multiple partnerships, and employee tracking. This system allows us to post documents for editing, automatically notify partners of the information, and receive feedback in a timely manner. Additionally, this system is used for the Health Alert Network in Utah, a rapid public health notification system during times of emergency. UNIS provides a reliable mechanism to rapidly share information with hundreds of UDOH employees, the local health departments, and the health care provider community. In addition, the Utah Epi Xchange system is in development for epidemiologic investigation coordination throughout the state.
- The HIV Treatment and Care Program's AIDS Drug Assistance Program staff actively participates in the National AIDS Task Force. This group is aggressively negotiating pricing with the various drug manufacturers to obtain additional rebates and price reductions.
- All of the registered nurses who work for the Department have been identified and placed on a single e-mail notification list. More than 120 RN's fulfill various roles in the Department, and a single method of contacting them allows the Department to respond to both Davis County and Salt Lake Valley Health Department's recent requests for registered nurse staffing assistance within a very short timeframe.
- Convened the Governor’s Taskforce for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness which will meet six times from September 2006 to February 2007 and prepare a report with recommendations for the Governor to address the threat of an influenza pandemic. The Division also convenes a workgroup on Pandemic Influenza Preparedness.

## **Division of Community and Family Health Services**

- Video and telephone conferences instead of face-to-face meetings were conducted between Bureau of Health Promotion and local health departments' staff, resulting in approximately \$13,700 of savings, which were then applied to public health interventions.
- The Bureau of Health Promotion leased a commercial quality printer and, utilizing the graphic design skills of in-house staff, has saved approximately \$7,000 on design and printing of reports and educational materials. The savings were applied to public health interventions.
- The Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program moved from hard copies to on-line or DVD/CD versions for several items; Gold Medal Schools (GMS) newsletter, GMS Implementation Guide, GMS mentor accountability survey, 5 A Day grocery store tour educational support materials, and the Local Health Department HDSPP burden reports. These changes resulted in a savings of over \$25,000 which was then used to support more elementary schools participating in GMS.
- The Utah Diabetes Prevention and Control Program has reduced travel for education and training through increased use of Tele-Health distance learning. In addition to reducing cost, this has increased training participation and outcomes reporting from partners across the state. Based on the successes of this program, several other states are now implementing similar efforts.
- MCH eliminated a program manager position by assigning the duties to another program manager position.
- MCH Bureau eliminated 1 secretary position by assigning the duties to another secretarial position.
- WIC streamlined the Management Evaluation process for local WIC agencies that has reduced staff time for both State and local staff.
- Immunization program eliminated one secretarial position.
- Immunization program developed a doses administered data base that reduces staff time in tracking vaccines.
- Reproductive Health program eliminated .5 FTE for Baby Your Baby phone eligibility by transferring responsibility to Baby Your Baby program.
- Many MCH programs have reduced printing costs by creating PDF documents instead of printing reports, etc.
- UtahCLICKS was launched, a web-based application process to help families apply for federal and state programs online. UtahCLICKS enables families to enter common demographic information that is populated into applications for programs that parents select, providing immediate feedback on possible eligibility for those programs. Applications are forwarded to each applicable program that is selected and which the

family may be eligible for. No information can be forwarded to a program without the person's permission.

- CSHCN Bureau eliminated 2 clerical positions by streamlining procedures and having other staff pick up some of the duties.
- CSHCN Bureau eliminated a program manager position by consolidating parts of the School Age and Specialty Services Program with two other programs.

### **Division of Health Systems Improvement**

- Transfer of the Health Clinics of Utah and Family Dental Plan (now called the Bureau of Clinical Services) from Health Care Financing to Health Systems Improvement. This year (past 6 months) we have dealt with several clinical issues relative to these programs that was handled in a more rapid and efficient manner by having these programs in a clinical Division.
- Initiation of the Safety Net Summit and associated activities. As one of Dr. Sundwall's priorities, this activity has greatly improved the communication among safety net providers and a variety of health service entities (including the DOH) that has assisted these providers in their operations, to more efficiently deliver needed health care services to Utah's medically underserved populations. This effort will continue in 2007 and include the development of a web-site to maximize our ability to communicate with and provide information to, these safety net providers and their constituents.
- We have done an internal reorganization of the Bureau of Child Care Licensing to create a position for a training specialist which has resulted in a greatly improved ability to educate and inform child care providers and our own child care licensors on new policies and rules that impact their work. This was done, in part, in response to the fining of the 2005 Legislative Audit which found inconsistencies (thus inefficiencies) in our inspections, enforcement and provider training.
- The St. George office of the Bureau of Health Facilities Licensing, Certification and Resident Assessment had become full operational in 2006. This facility has saved travel time and travel dollars for licensing and certification staff as they perform required visits to the many licensed health facilities in southern Utah. This has also increased our ability to respond efficiently to customer requests in this rapidly growing area of our state.
- The Bureau of Emergency Medical Services has fully implemented their contract with the Office of Education to conduct the high school training program known as "What to Do When Every Second Counts." This program is now reaching more high school students with higher quality training (including much improved materials), and has gained much greater acceptance and support from high school teachers than the prior program. All this has been achieved with no increase in the program's cost.
- The Bureau of Health Facilities Licensing, Certification and Resident Assessment continues to maximize their recovery of Federal funds to reimburse for inspection, certification and assessment activities; which minimizes the need to use state funding.
- Our Patient Safety Initiative has done several programs which have increased the safety (and therefore, the efficiency) of our health care system; including, the correct site surgery initiative, the identification of "sentinel events" (such as adverse drug reactions)

and implementing system changes to reduce these events. In the coming year, this initiative plans to expand the number of issues that are studied so that appropriate improvement recommendations can be made to the affected providers.

- The Office of Primary Care and Rural Health has revised its process for reviewing and scoring the Primary Care Grant applications. The revisions have made this process more consistent and more objective (thus, fairer to applicants). This has made the process more efficient by reducing complaints and challenges to the older, somewhat more arbitrary process.

### **Administrative Support**

- The Executive Office has made sweeping use of web-based communication, video conferencing, and computerized workflow systems to improve productivity and reduce costs. Dozens of forms, policies and procedures manuals, reports, and other documents have been converted for electronic access by staff and the public, thus saving paper, printing costs, and postage. In addition:
- The Office of Human Resource Management, transferred to the Department of Human Resource Management, has initiated a supervisory training program on the web that trainees can follow from their own stations. HR Status Activity Reports grouped by division are now available online.
- The Office of Fiscal Operations conducted an internal audit of operations at the State Laboratory that resulted in streamlined procedures for billing and collections. Budget status reports were reconfigured so as to be accessible to Division managers on the web. OFO has updated its Contract Policies & Procedures Manual for online access, and a web-based system allows Department staff to track the progress of individual contracts by log number. In accordance with State management policy, electronic time sheets have replaced the paper-based payroll system throughout the Department.
- The Office of Information Technology has reorganized work assignments according to the specialized skills of specific staff members. Technicians have also implemented an “imaging” program to speed the programming of desktop computers. Use of the ZEN Asset Management system reduces the time and labor involved in maintaining inventory. Moving to a Storage Area Network (SAN) system reduces the time required to increase disk space available to the user network and individual servers; now single users rather than the entire Department personnel receive notification when their disk space is filled. Also, having four out of 110 staff licensed as Dell Certified Technicians allows them direct access to Dell technical support resources, which reduces the amount of time needed to fix hardware and to initiate warranty replacements. Finally, this program continues to work toward integrating staff into the statewide Department of Technology Services.
- The Office of Employee Support has upgraded its video conferencing equipment in order to serve larger meetings more efficiently. The warehouse is moving to a barcode system to better identify, document, and retrieve items stored. A fleet management reporting system has been implemented to keep closer track of State vehicle use by Department staff. The part-time onsite credit union has been replaced by an automatic teller machine; the office space freed by this decision has been devoted to Department programs. ESO

also conducts monthly committee meetings as well as annual risk management audits. This degree of supervision reduces the Department's annual liability premium by 15% (\$54,363 for FY2006).

- In March 2006, DOH assumed management of a 16 vehicle daily motor pool. The vehicles are primarily used by DOH and DEQ personnel, but are available to any state employee. The availability and utilization of the vehicles has increased with the responsibility being at the department level.

### **Telephone Usage**

The Department completed an evaluation of all the desk and cell phone assignments. The review identified a number of phone services that are either duplicated or that are now considered unnecessary. The table below identifies the number of lines that will be eliminated by December as well as the estimated savings of this effort. We believe the Department will save approximately \$88,000 per year.